

REMARKS

In the Office Action, the Examiner rejected Claims 1-21, which are all of the pending claims, over the prior art, principally U.S. Patent 6,519,700 (Ram, et al.). Specifically, Claims 1, 4-6, 9, 10 and 13 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102 as being fully anticipated by Ram, et al; and claims 2, 3, 7, 8, 11 and 12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 as being unpatentable over Ram, et al. in view of U.S. Patent 6,247,127 (Vandergeest). Claims 14-21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103 as being unpatentable over Ram, et al in view of Vandergeest and further in view of U.S. Patent 6,775,655 (Peinado).

Independent Claims 1, 6, 10, 14 and 18 are being amended to better define the subject matters of these claims.

For the reasons set forth below, Claims 1-21 patentably distinguish over the prior art and are allowable. The Examiner is, accordingly, requested to reconsider and to withdraw the above-identified rejections of the claims and to allow these claims.

The present invention, generally, relates to a highly flexible and minimally intrusive digital rights management system. The invention solves an important need that has grown substantially along with the growth of the Internet.

To elaborate, the growth of the Internet has made it forceful and persuasive for procedures to distribute content to a worldwide audience. With conventional technology, regardless of how sophisticated the subscriber and access control systems are, once digital content has left the Web sever for a consumer to view or play it, the publisher loses copyright control, as well as any access control restriction enforced on the Web server.

Several digital rights management (DRM) systems have appeared on the market in the past few years. In a common DRM system, users are prevented from directly decrypting the contents. The general approach adopted by the DRM systems commonly available on the market requires the use of a specific player. The fundamental problems with this approach include application dependency, content type dependency, and interference with application development.

The present invention effectively addresses these problems by providing a digital rights management system that is completely transparent to the player/viewer application running on the client host system. The invention does this by controlling access to the content and constraining it according to the rights and privileges granted to the user during the content acquisition phase.

In particular, there are three major components of the instant invention: a verification system, a trusted content handler, and a user control interface. The verification system verifies certain properties of programs that are executing or that are about to be executed. The trusted content handler performs the main tasks of content decryption and feed, and the user control interface ensures that user interactions with the player interactions do not violate usage rights.

An important aspect of the invention is that the certificate generator generates a certificate after inspecting the application code and determining that certain required properties have been met by that application code. The references of record do not disclose or suggest this function of the certificate generator.

More specifically, Ram, et al, the primary reference relied on by the Examiner, discloses a procedure for distributing electronic documents. In this procedure, a self-protecting document is used that contains an encrypted document, a secure set of permissions and the software needed to process the document.

As the Examiner has recognized, however, there are a number of important features of the preferred embodiment of the invention that are not disclosed in Ram, et al. In order to overcome these deficiencies of Ram, et al. as a reference, the Examiner relies on Vandergeest and Peinado.

Vandergeest describes a method and system for secure off-line communications. The Examiner particularly relied on Vandergeest for its disclosure of an off-line verifier to verify that player applications have certain properties. Importantly, as discussed from column 3, line 66 to column 4, line 7 of Vandergeest, the verification is made by checking a directory to obtain a certificate.

Peinado, et al. describes a digital rights management system. This DRM is on the user's computing devices; and, when invoked, locates licenses in a license store, selects a located license, obtains a decryption key, and decrypts digital content with the decryption key.

Neither Ram, et al, Vandergeest, nor Peinado disclose or suggest the feature of using a certificate generator to generate a certificate after inspecting the application code and determining that certain required properties have been met by that application code.

Independent Claims 1, 6, 10, 14 and 18 describe the above-discussed feature of the invention. In particular, Claims 1, 6 and 10 describe the feature that the verification system includes a certificate generator for generating a certificate after inspecting the player application code and determining that a certain required property has been met. Claims 14 and 18 are directed, respectively, to a code identity and integrity verification system and to a method for verifying the identity and integrity of code. Claim 14 positively sets forth a certificate generator for, and Claim 18 sets forth the step of using a certificate generator for, receiving applications, for inspecting the application codes to determine if the applications exhibit a predefined property, and for issuing a trust certificate for each of the applications that exhibits the predefined property.

The other references of record have been reviewed, and these other references, whether considered individually or in combination, also fail to disclose this use of the certificate generator.

Because of the above-discussed differences between Claims 1, 6, 10, 14 and 18 and the prior art, and because of the advantages associated with those differences, Claims 1, 6, 10, 14 and 18 patentably distinguish over the prior art and are allowable. Claims 2-5 are dependent from Claim 1 and are allowable therewith; Claims 7-10 are dependent from, and are allowable with, Claim 6; and Claims 11-13 are dependent from Claim 10 and are allowable therewith. Likewise, Claims 15-17 are dependent from Claim 14 and are allowable therewith; and Claims 19-21 are dependent from, and are allowable with, Claim 18. The Examiner, accordingly, is respectfully asked to reconsider and to withdraw the rejection of Claims 1, 4-6, 9, 10 and 13 under 35 U.S.C. 102, and the rejections of claims 2, 3, 7, 8, 11, 12 and 14-21 under 35 U.S.C. 103, and to allow Claims 1-21.

Every effort has been made to place this application in condition for allowance, a notice of which is requested. If the Examiner believes that a telephone conference with Applicants' Attorneys would be advantageous to the disposition of this case, the Examiner is asked to telephone the undersigned.

Respectfully submitted,

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